

Please Come Back by Kayalah

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Summary: Only eight months after the boys lost one of their best friends, Eleven, they try to go back to their old boyish habits. Will is back, but his condition is very unstable and Dustin, Lucas, and Mike are scared for him. In the heat of all of this happening, the boys want to search for Eleven again, putting in as much time as they had right when she disappeared. DISCLAIMER: SPOILERS

1. Chapter 1: Mike?

"Mike?" Eleven's voice echoed.

Mike shot up in his bed, sweat beginning to pool under him as he woke and looked around the dark abyss that was his room. He sighed as he realized he was the only one there. Just another one of those experiences.

Ever since Eleven had disappeared, Mike had these 'experiences'. He always heard her call for him, whether it be at school, at the dinner table, or in his sleep. She would gently say his name. He knew she was still alive. He knew she would be back.

After hearing about what Joyce had explained, about being in the Upside Down, he knew that Eleven was still with them, just in another plane. He slinked back down into his bed, pulling the sheets over him.

"El..." He whispered, as he stared at the ceiling, hoping for a response. Even if it was another "Mike?", like he'd been hearing constantly.

"Have you seen Mike, yet?" Dustin asked as he lowered his bike to the ground, meeting with Lucas.

"Nah, I didn't see him on the way here. He should be here soon." Lucas said as he did the same as Dustin, carefully lowering his bike to its side as they made their way to Will's door. After the bickering of who is going to knock, Lucas and Dustin quickly changed their demeanor as the door flew open with Jonathan standing there.

"Oh, uh... Hey guys. Will's upstairs. Be careful with him. He's not doing great today." Jonathan said, seeming to be out of breath as he shuffled out the door, leaving it open for the boys. "Thanks Jonathan." Dustin said, hurriedly pushing Lucas into the doorway, and shutting it behind him. They booked it upstairs, headed directly to Will's room.

"Byers!" Dustin exclaimed, busting in through the door, completely nullifying Jonathan's request. Lucas quickly followed, both boys seeming just as excited as the other.

Joyce was sitting next to Will's bed, and shot the boys a glare when they burst into the room. "Not a good time to be rowdy, boys!" She said, trying to be quiet, but having quite the tone to it, putting emphasis on every word. She was holding onto Will's hand; his hand was barely grasping hers back.

Lucas and Dustin made their way over to the side of the bed, trying to be quiet with their steps. Will's eyes were closed and his breaths were soft. His skin was pale as could be, making him seem so fragile. With a slight cough, he opened his eyes a bit and managed to breathe out a quiet phrase.

"Hey Dustin. Hey Lucas." He spoke, trying to sound excited. A smile left just as quickly as it had come as he coughed again. He rested his head on the pillow, angled so that he could see the boys.

"I'll let you boys have your time. If he needs anything, come find me." Joyce pestered Dustin and Lucas before turning back to Will. "I'll be downstairs in the kitchen, okay? I'll be back up after awhile, honey." She patted his hand gently before leaving the room.

"How ya doing, man? We thought we'd come see you for awhile. I brought your homework for you." Lucas said, as he slung his backpack off his shoulder and began poking through it.

"Yeah, and Mike said he'd be coming too. Maybe we can play a pickup game of D&D if you're feeling up fo-..." Dustin began, before Will could even answer the first question.

"I don't know why this came back, guys." Will said under his breath, interrupting Dustin. He shifted his gaze from Dustin to Lucas, and then back. The bags under his eyes, the paleness of his skin, and the weakness of his body gave it away.

"Is it... the slugs? Have you coughed up anymore?" Dustin asked, looking to Lucas and then back to Will. "I didn't think it would be this again..." He mumbled, reaching his hands to his head, resting them

there after adjusting his hat out of a nervous habit.

"Yeah man, I thought the doctor's cleared it out, and gave you the green light. It could just be a slight cold, you know?" Lucas butted in, pulling his attention from his book bag.

"No, guys. This is the same feeling I had when I coughed up the first slug. I know this feeling... This is that..." Will said, before breaking into a coughing fit. He reached his elbow up, to cough into it several times, trying to clear something from his throat before continuing on, "I don't want to tell my mom; she'll be so sad. Not with all that's going on..." Will brokenly said, taking the occasional moment to cough and wheeze.

"Well..." Dustin motioned to Lucas and then to himself, "We're here for you. And I know Mike is too..." He said, trying get a smile out of Will.

After an hour of the boys joking around with what they could and trying to keep Will in high spirits, Joyce made her way back into the room. She began wrapping it up; she let the boys know that it was getting late and Will needed his rest.

"But... I thought Mike was coming?" Dustin turned to Lucas, his eyes bugging with confusion.

"Might have gotten caught up in something. Maybe his mom made him eat at home." Lucas said with a shrug, leaving books and a notebook on the bedside table for Will. They both said their goodbyes and made their way to the door.

Walking out, they thanked Joyce for letting them stay for awhile and closed the door behind them. As they stepped closer to their bikes, they notice a third bike lying close by.

Mike's bike.

"What the..." Dustin said under his breath, and quickly looked around. Will's house was heavily guarded by thick woods, and with it getting darker, they could barely see through the tree line.

2. Chapter 2: Forest

His dim light hardly lit the thick woods in front of him, as Mike made his way deeper into coverage outside of the Byers' house. Darkness had crept up so quickly, making it nearly impossible to see anything except silhouettes of the trees. Squinted eyes, trying to keep his lookout for any subtle movements, he passed by familiar tree collections that the boys had explored in the past. He knew exactly where he was, flashlight or not. He had ventured this direction plenty of times, going on adventures with Lucas, Will, and Dustin.

"El?" Mike asked, not expecting an answer. He peered over his shoulder, trying to catch some sort of movement through the darkness. Nothing.

The wind whistled through the branches above, causing everything to shift constantly. Mike noticed the weather beginning to change; the wind had picked up a bit and the temperature dropped quite a bit from when he first entered the forest. He continued on, though, reaching the unfamiliar areas in the forest. They hadn't gone out this far, but he was determined to find some sort of sign of Eleven.

Ever since he had met her, there was something unique about her. Something that... he couldn't quite put his finger on. He knew that he liked her, but there was more to it. He wanted to be able to protect her, even though he knew she could pick him up and throw him across the room at any given time. He wanted to find her and bring her home.

"Eleven! Can you hear me?" His voice had picked up, trying to be heard over the sound of the rustling trees and bushes. Nothing.

With a quiet sigh, he threw his hood over his head and pulled on the strings to tighten it up a bit. There was no rain yet, but it was coming. Mike flashed back for a moment, back to when they first found El. When Dustin, Lucas, and Mike had stumbled upon her, shivering in her gown. He thought back to how scared they all were, and moreso of how scared she was. He remembered how she needed help and protection, and how he was the one to give that to her. And now, out looking for her, he took it as a failure. She was gone.

He shined his light around him, a few bushes shaking in the wind had startled him for a moment. He laughed it off quickly, letting the light find its way in front of him once again. At the end of the light, at its dimmest point, was a pair of feet. The feet shuffled a bit, trying to find cover behind some foliage, but Mike's light caught a glimpse of what it was. Someone.

"Do you think he's in there?" Dustin asked, his hands resting on his head out of nervousness. His hat tilted upwards on his head, being messed up every time he did this. He quickly shot a look to Lucas who was searching over Mike's bike like it was a crime scene.

"Okay, well.. The good news is that it doesn't look like Mike fell off of his bike. I don't see skid marks or anything. Maybe..." He turned around to the entrance of the forest, the trees starting off quite spread out, but looking into the forest, the trees became very dense very quickly. "...Maybe he went in?" Lucas' voice trailed out quickly as he gulped. The forest was always a frightening place at night, especially after what had happened to Will.

"I'm not going in there in the dark with nothing. Let's get a flashlight from Will... And maybe his BB-22 rifle..." Dustin said hesitantly, his eyes still bugged out from even just the thought of venturing into the forest. Dustin's voice had just begun to change over the last few months, dropping a few octaves. His voice cracked often enough during his everyday activities, but more so when he was nervous.

"I've got one in my backpack. If we're going to find Mike, we have to get a move on it!" Lucas said, ruffling through his backpack in search of the huge metal flashlight. "He can't be too far. He knows it's going to start raining soon." He said as the flashlight emerged from his backpack, almost being too big for him to hold. He shined it right into Dustin's face as a ready check, and beckoned Dustin over. "Come on! Let's go!" Still a little dazed from being hit with the light, Dustin followed Lucas, staying relatively close to him; staying close to the light.

The trees buzzed from the flow of the wind, it twisting and winding in between every leaf and branch, stirring up the entrance to the forest as the boys made their way in.

"Mike!?" Lucas yelled, his voice seeming to be swallowed by the roar of the winds that were coming in. He flicked the light in random spots around them, hoping to find Mike. Dustin stayed close by, trying to see through the dark patches that Lucas hadn't hit with the light.

"Mike! You need to come back RIGHT NOW!" Dustin yelled, having several voice cracks in there, but just trying to make himself heard over the winds endless melody.

A couple hundred feet into the forest, Lucas turned to Dustin, "Dude, I don't know if Mike even went this way. Maybe he went in at a weird angle?" He pointed the flashlight in an obscure direction, before throwing his arms in the air in a fed-up manner.

"Lucas... Shine your light back over there..." Dustin said, his gaze focused on something in the distance. He raised his hand to point directly at where Lucas had randomly thrown his light previously. He didn't look terrified; he was only uneasy. "There's someone over there..." He finished his statement, lowering his voice as he did.

"MIKE!" Lucas yelled out, as the light shined on a hooded figure deeper into the forest. He started by quickly walking and it turned to running towards who they saw. Lucas staying quite a bit ahead of Dustin, he continued on, paving the trail for his friend to follow.